A PRECIOUS PRESENT

GOLDEN NECKLACE

PART -- II

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

TO THE BELOVED DAUGHTERS

Dear daughters!

You may have seen necklaces of various sorts.

They may be of silver or gold, studded or simple, small or large, real or artificial. Their glamour and glitter will all the same enchant you to possess one for yourself. But just think for a while!

These necklaces are such that their glitter vanishes or fades away after a while. Most of them turn out to be artificial. There is always the fear of breakage, loss or robbery, even at the risk of injury or loss of life.

I have prepared for you a necklace of such beauty that its pearls are genuine and highly precious. Its glamour is more endur-

ing. You adorn yourself with it. You will then be the sparkling gem in the eyes of all.

And what is more, it will be a boon to you in the Hereafter.

MAY ALLAH BLESS YOU.

Your well-wisher,
AFZAL HUSSAIN

ONE

BASHFULNESS AND MODESTY

MODESTY is the most precious ornament for the girls.

The daughters who adorn themselves with this precious ornament become the most sparkling gems in the eyes of all. Father, mother, brother, sister, and kith and kin, all alike, hold them in high esteem, and receive them most cheerfully. To the virtuous girls modesty is as dear as the pupil of their eyes. To them modesty is more precious than martyr's blood.

You are well acquainted with the beloved Prophet's beloved daughter, Hadrath Bibi Fatima (RAZ).

In respect of modesty, as in all other virtuous adorable qualities, as compared to other girls, her character was supremely exemplary. Bashfulness and modesty was well ingrained in her very nature. She always remained at a great distance away from any kind of shamelessness and immodesty.

On one occasion, for some urgent work, she approached her father. There she found some men sitting around him, hence she quietly returned from there.

She used to take great care in covering her person fully from head to foot. She was required to do all the household chores by herself, so much so that she used to carry the leather water-carrier filled with water from a far off distance, but in the course of all these functions she never allowed any part of her body to remain unveiled which may amount to non-observance of purdah by women. She never put on any thin dress that showed her body. The Prophet has said:

"Allah has cursed those women who wear clothes and still remain naked."

Of course, in her life-time she always took precaution, but even at the fag end of her life, during her fatal illness, mostly she remained worried lest after her death her bier should be kept open which may amount to non-observance of purdah, because till then, like the bier of male persons, the bier of females too was kept open.

When this matter came up in discussion with Bibi Asma, the daughter of Hadrath 'Amees (RAZ), she revealed that in Abyssinia there is a practice that on the biers of females they erect wooden poles and stretch a piece of cloth around it so as to make a purdah around the dead body. Then she sent for a few branches of palm trees and demonstrated how it is done. Bibi Fatima was much pleased and observed that it was the best way. Accordingly, on her bier too, similar curtain was hung. It is from then onwards that biers of females are carried up in this way under the cover of purdah.

It was the salubrious (health-giving) effect of this bashfulness and modesty of Bibi Fatima (RAZ) that Hadrath Hussain (RAZ) the son, who was nursed and trained in her lap, sacrificed his life for the cause of his 'Deen' (the way of life).

TWO

THE GOOD EFFECT OF READING THE QURAN

The effect of reading the Quran is highly impressionable.

Reading the Quran (Book of Guidance) with understanding, pondering over the meaning and implications of what was revealed to the Prophet from Allah, does bring about reform in us personally. But those girls who punctually recite the Quran after the 'Fajr Namaz' (morning prayer) also influence their younger brothers and sisters considerably. As soon as they wake up from their sweet slumber when the rhythm and beauty of these Quranic verses falls into their ears they also are impressed much and gradually they improve themselves.

Caliph, Hadrath Umar the Great (RAZ), whose 'whip was more terrible than another's sword', and whose rigid hand made the great generals and rulers tremble, embraced Islam spontaneously after listen-

ng to the awe-inspiring Quranic verses. At irst he was the staunch enemy of Islam. The Arab idolatrous leaders had made him nuch mistrustful of Prophet Muhammad PBUH). They had begun to think that by presenting 'Islam', the beloved Prophet was naking them to forsake the 'Deen' (way of ife), which their fathers followed. Hence in a fit of rage, with dark frowns on his face, ie set out to slay Muhammad (PBUH). Heaven forbid! in this way he was going to extinguish the very lamp which was adiating the rays of Islam! On his way he nappened to meet one person (Nu'aim b. Abdullah). When he saw Hadrath Umar in ferocious mood brandishing his naked sword, he at once grasped the situation and asked him, "What is the matter, where are you going?" Umar (RAZ) replied that he was going to slay Muhammad (PBUH). He said:"Better you look at your own house irst. Both your sister and brother-in-law nave converted to Islam." On hearing this ie instantly returned back to his sister's nouse and severely smote both his sister and brother-in-law, till their bodies were

streaming with blood. In this plight she toc swelled up with anger and said: "Umar! Dc as you will, Islam can never get out of ou hearts. Just first listen to the BOOK b listening to which only we embracec Islam." These words of his sister producec strange effect on his mind. And at last h agreed to listen to the inspiring verses of th Quran. Hadrath Fatima (RAZ) read th first 'Section' (Ruku) of Sura 'Ta-Ha with heart-burning passion. Hadrath Uma (RAZ) listened with rapt attention and eacl word seemed to inspire his heart with awe His eyes welled up with tears. He got u from there and straight way went to th house of the beloved Prophet (PBUH) an embraced Islam in all humility.

In this way a sister's reading the Qura before her brother had such deep impact o his mind that the same brother who was s much in opposition to the Prophet and th 'Deen' (way of life) which he brought, tha he set out from his house with swor buckled on, converted himself to Islam an became the greatest servant of 'Deen'

THREE

LOVE OF THE PROPHET

Allah sent the Prophet (PBUH) as a mercy for the worlds. He showed kindness to all and earnestly wished for their welfare. His heart leaped out in sympathy at the sufferings of others. He felt restless till such time as he did not leave any stone unturned to relieve them of distress and difficulty. He showered great affection on little children, both boys and girls. Often he allowed his grand daughter Umama to leap into his arms. She would not leave his lap even when he was engaged in prayers. In such state only he would perform his 'Namaz' (prayers), and whenever he went in 'Ruku' (bowing), or 'Sajdah' (prostration), he would take her off from his lap.

Who will not adore so loveable a Prophet? That is why all women, men, children and aged persons loved and revered him in greater measure than even their parents, sisters and brothers.

On one occasion a large army of infidels

attacked the Muslims. The Prophet (PBUH) and his beloved companions went to confront them. The Prophet was seriously injured in this battle. His teeth were broken. At this juncture rumour was afloat that the Prophet had been killed. With the spread of this news there was fear and dismay among his Medinan followers. Men, women, boys and girls all stepped out of their houses in utter restlessness.

In Medina there was the clan of Banu Dinar. On hearing the news of Prophet's death, one pious lady of this clan, in her love for the Prophet, impatiently ran helter skelter and reached the battle-ground. On her way she learnt that in this battle her brother, father and husband were all martyred. She listened with great patience the whole account of their martyrdom and said: "All this is true, but tell me what is the actual state of the Prophet (PBUH)?"

She was informed that he was quite safe and alive, however, he had sustained serious injuries. Later on when she saw the Prophet with her own eyes she spontaneously exclaimed:

"With you alive, I bear all loss with endurance."

EXERCISES

1. What was the treatment of the Prophet with the children?
2. Why does the Prophet bestow extraordinary love on the people?
3. What rumour was spread in the battle?
4. What was the effect of this rumour on the Medinans?
5. What was the anguish of the pious lady of Dinar clan?
6. What did this pious lady exclaim when she saw the Prophet's face in calm composure in that hour of anguish?

FOUR

REFRAIN FROM INCURRING THE DISPLEASURE OF THE PARENTS

"Allah is pleased if you please the father. Allah's displeasure lies in the displeasure of the father."

The beloved Prophet's beloved daughter, Bibi Fatima (RAZ) was well aware of this truth. That is why she never did any work which would displease her dear father. If at any time inadvertently she committed any error or ommission, she would at once vow not to do it any more, and never again would she repeat the same mistake.

On one occasion when the Prophet had returned from some journey, Bibi Fatima (RAZ), in jubilation adorned her home. She hung a coloured curtain on the entrance door and put silver bangles on both her sons, Hadrath Hasan (RAZ) and Hadrath Hussain (RAZ). As per his usual habit, the Prophet first went to see her, but when he saw all these worldly goods he returned

without seeing her. Bibi Fatima (RAZ) came to know about the displeasure of the Prophet and felt much grieved. Tears flowed from her eyes. She tore off the curtain and took the bangles from the children's hands and she sent those to the Prophet with a word that she had given them in charity. He could give them to any one whom he wished. The Prophet sold them and the amount so realised was distributed amongst poor Muslims, who were living on the platform of the 'Masjid-e-Nabwi' (Prophet's Mosque), in the service of 'Deen'.

On one occasion Hadrath Ali (RAZ) gave Bibi Fatima (RAZ) a gold necklace. While she was showing it to her female companion after removing it from her neck, accidentally the Prophet came to meet her. His sight fell on the necklace. He at once returned from there. Bibi Fatima (RAZ) understood what had gone wrong which caused displeasure to the Prophet. She sold the necklace and bought a slave and set him free in the way of Allah. When the Prophet earned of this laudable action he was much

pleased and thanked Allah.

In short, whenever she came to know that any work caused the displeasure of her dear father, she would at once give it up. That is the reason why the Prophet also always remembered her with utmost care and affection, and honoured his daughter.

EXERCISES

1. How was Bibi Fatima (RAZ)?
2. What was her behaviour with her father?
3. What all she did to please the Prophet?
4. What are the events mentioned in this lesson?
5. What do you learn from these incidents?

FIVE

CHARITY

We observe that in this world there is no equal distribution of wealth amongst all people. In His Divine Wisdom, Allah has bestowed more wealth on some and less on others, and some miserable person is deprived of it totally. He has neither a crumb of bread to satiate his hunger nor a piece of cloth to protect his body from heat, cold and rain. In fact the share of these helpless creatures is kept in deposit with those fortunate persons who have been given more than what they need for their requirement. It is the bounden duty of such affluent persons that they keep themselves in the look out for such needy and destitute persons and give them their right. Those who are conscious of discharging their duty help the poor and destitute persons wholeheartedly. Many a woman is there who gives away bread to the needy at the cost of starving her own self.

One day it so happened there was nothing

to eat in the house of Bibi Fatima (RAZ) Her husband, Hadrath Ali (RAZ), brough some barley after toiling and hard labour. After grinding a portion of it Bibi Fatima (RAZ) prepared bread out of it. She had just commenced taking her meals when a needy person came to her door and expressed that he was hungry. Bibi Fatima (RAZ) gave her entire food to him.

Thereafter she again grinded some more portion of barley and prepared bread, and just then an orphan came. This time too she gave it all to the orphan and then yet again started grinding the remaining portion of barley.

A third time meal was ready when a prisoner asked her for alms in the way of Allah. She gave the entire lot to him and the whole house starved.

These little acts of kindness pleased Allah so much that in praise of all at home a verse was revealed, which says:

> "They feed the destitute, orphans and prisoners in their love for Allah only to please Him."

Just ponder a while! The pious lady who

earns encomiums (praise) from Allah Almighty, how exceptionally fortunate she must be!

EXERCISES

1. In this world, so far as distribution of riches is concerned, in how many classes can you divide people?
2. Whose right do you think it is, over all wealth that is surplus to your needs?
3. In what way is the right of the deprived people conveyed to them?
4. In what way did Bibi Fatima (RAZ) help the needy?
5. If you have helped any destitute person, please relate it.

SIX

PREVENT (AN EVIL) IN THE NICK OF TIME

He is Allah, the One and Only God, and there is none comparable to Him. His Messengers alone He has protected from all impurities and falsities. Rest all mortals are liable to err. The pious slaves of Allah know this reality. Therefore they are much pleased whenever they are cautioned against any wrong and they reform themselves immediately. It is the duty of every Muslim also to prevent on the spot if they find any one committing error. In this way evil is suppressed.

You, of course, know about Hadrath Umar (RAZ) that great generals and rulers used to tremble at the mention of his very name, but he had enthused such healthy spirit in the minds of his people that freely and fearlessly they used to raise objections on the spot wherever they felt he was going wrong. And the happier part of it was that he would accept it wholeheartedly.

On one occasion he was delivering a Sermon. He was threatening the Muslims for giving currency to excessive Mehar in Nikah. In a way he was right in what he was saying. Fixation of excessive Mehar creates lot of difficulties in marriage. Hadrath Umar (RAZ) said: "People are fixing larger Mehar amount than even what was fixed for the Prophet's wives and daughters! Whoever exceeds the amount more than the Sunnah of the Prophet, shall be punished by law."

Cajoling people for greater Mehar was alright, but he had no right to fix any limit over it, because Allah has not fixed any such limit in the Quran. On the contrary, it allows man to give more, if his resources and capacity permit. But Hadrath Umar (RAZ) had forgotten this fact while he was adderssing the people. What right have you got to put limitation on Mehar? The right which Allah has bestowed on womenfolk, in this way, you are trying to divest us from it," a lady stood up and said.

Then, that lady recited in public this

verse of the Quran which says:

> "And if you wish to take one wife for another and you have given unto one of them a sum of money (however great), take nothing from it. Would you take it by the way of calumny and open wrong?"
>
> (Women: IV:20).

On hearing this Hadrath Umar confessed:

> "An old lady also knows more than what Umar knows! Indeed! Today she has saved me from punishment."

Have you seen now what is the great benefit of preventing an evil in the nick of time?

SEVEN

SACRIFICE

SACRIFICE lies in this that you exert yourself and suffer pain for the comfort and welfare of others. This is the true badge of man's nobility. As compared to boys, Allah has bestowed this virtue on girls in greater measure. We observe that good daughters bear all sorts of pain and anguish for the comfort of their parents, brothers and sisters. Very often they stake their very life for others.

It is an event of recent occurrence that the enemy made an attack on an Arabian city, Tripolis. While men gave combat to the enemy, women and children too reached the battle-ground to extend their helping hand. On the field they were picking up the dead bodies, and to the wounded soldiers they were supplying water and dressing their wounds. Amongst these volunteers was a ten or eleven years old child, named Fatima. She was the only beloved daughter of Sardar Abdullah, who was the leader of the

chief clan of Tripolis.

The battle waged furiously. Thick and fast flew the bullets. Many brave and valiant soldiers were at their wits end and seemed to lose courage. But look at the fearless Fatima! With leather water-carrier on her shoulders she was running here and there to supply water to every wounded soldier as he fell on the battle-field. Amazed at her valiant deed some people even admonished her that she being the only daughter to her father should not risk her life in this way. She was quite firm in her resolve. She carried on her mission heedlessly.

On one occasion, accidentally, four Muslim soldiers were trapped badly in the snare of the enemy and were seriously injured. Fatima reached to them at once with water in hand to cool their lips. While she was in this action an enemy's cruel hand gripped her hand. She made unsuccessful attempts to extricate her hand. Quite nearby, her eyes fell on the abandoned sword of the wounded soldier. Quickly she pounced on the sword and made such lightning at-

tack on the enemy that his one hand was cut. But with another hand he inflicted such severe wound on Fatima that she fell on the ground in a pool of blood. Even while she was in this state, thought of the wounded soldiers was uppermost in her mind. With great effort she dragged along to a nearby wounded soldier but before she could supply water to him she herself breathed her last.

"Ah! We all belong to Allah and to Him shall we return!" O Fatima! Thou art the upholder of the honour of the ummah.

EIGHT

REFRAIN FROM ILLEGAL PROPERTY (EARNINGS)

When the reign of the four Caliphs (KHULFA-E-RASHEDIN) ended, in blind imitation of the ignorant communities, amongst Muslims too, rule of kingship gained currency. Muslim leaders began to consider 'Baitu'l Ma'l' (Public Treasury) as their personal property and began to spend it on their own personal comforts. No more was it necessary now to observe piety, sobriety (controlling one's passions) and full and correct knowledge of Quran and Hadith. On the contrary, however worthless may the son of a sardar be, he alone succeeded his father.

This sorry state continued for a long period. Thus condition of common Muslims was going from bad to worse economically, while the men of the royal family were spending their easy earned money for their own personal enjoyments. By a happy chance, Hadrath Umar bin

Abdul Aziz (RAZ) became the Caliph. He was exceedingly pious and God-fearing. He commenced to conduct the affairs of the government in the same way as it was during the rule of the four Caliphs. He started taking back the Jagirs (immoveable property) of the members of the royal family, which they had acquired by illegal means, even though he too belonged to the royal family.

His wife, Hadrath Fatima (RAZ) also belonged to the royal family. All her ornaments too were prepared out of 'Baitu'l Ma'l' (Public Treasury). When he explained in a nice way to his wife, Bibi Fatima (RAZ), she was most pleased to return all her ornaments.

The efforts of Hadrath Umar bin Abdul Aziz to bring about radical reforms were much disliked by the members of the royal family. Accordingly, his own brother-in-law got him killed by poisoning. After his martyrdom the murderer brother of Bibi Fatima brought all her ornaments and said to her:

"Your husband was highly oppressive

and unjust to you. He had credited to the public treasury all your ornaments. Take these now and be happy over it. I have brought it back from the public treasury."

In boundless fury Bibi Fatima (RAZ) flared up on him and said:

"Even at this moment I wholeheartedly hold my husband in great esteem. All these ornaments had come to my lot by illegal appropriation. I had deposited them in the 'Baitu'l Ma'l' at my own sweet will. When it is the property of 'Baitu'l Ma'l' the question of taking it back does not at all arise."

When the brother heard this reply from his sister he hung down his head in shame.

NINE

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Dear daughters! By now you have read many stories of Bibi Fatima, the beloved daughter of the beloved Prophet. What a sweet and lovely daughter she was to her father! She loved her father extremely. She became restless whenever she found her father in pain or distress. She always strove to keep him happy and avoided to incur his displeasure because she knew too well that in the pleasure of father lies the pleasure of Allah, and Allah's displeasure lies in the displeasure of the father. The beloved Prophet did all the household chores by himself. She too performed the entire household work by herself. She took great care to look to the needs of the poor and destitute. She would feed them at the cost of keeping herself hungry. She was the emblem of bashfulness and modesty. Throughout she lived a life of utmost modesty. During her fatal illness she introduced the practice of carrying the biers of females under pro-

tection of purdah. She was so much particular about observance of 'Namaz' (prayer) 'Roza' (fasting) and 'Zikr' (remembrance of Allah) that one 'Zikr' (remembrance of Allah) has come to be known after her as 'Tasbih Fatima' (Rosary of Fatima). Hadrath Fatima (RAZ) had striking resemblance with her father in respect of her colour and complexion, her gait and style of movement while standing, sitting or walking, and her conversation, pronunciation and manner of talking.

On account of her manifold virtues she was loveable to her beloved father, family members and kith and kin. Till this day whoever reads or hears anything about her admires her wholeheartedly.

You have read the story about Hadrath Umar's (RAZ) sister, Hadrath Fatima. For the sake of 'Deen' (way of life), this pious slave of Allah bore the beating of her brother till she was bleeding profusely. Her steadfastness and melodious recitation of the Quran melted the stony heart of a person like Hadrath Umar (RAZ) and good fortune smiled on him, in that he accepted

the faith.

You have read how pious was Hadrath Fatima, the wife of Umar II. When she came to know that her ornaments were prepared out of illegal money, she deposited the ornaments in 'Baitu'l Ma'l' and was least tempted to accept them when her brother brought them back to her on the martyrdom of her husband.

You have read about yet another Fatima bint Abdullah. How brave and valiant she was! Just a tiny child, but she had the courage to enter into the battlefield without fear. Risking her own life, she rendered first aid to the wounded and supplied them water. In this way she was martyred for the comfort of others.

Do you realise now what blessing there is in this name?

No wonder then people keep the names of their daughters as Fatima! Many girls amongst you must have been named as Fatima, or at least the word Fatima must have been suffixed with their proper nouns, like, Bilqees Fatima, Birjees Fatima, Kaneez Fatima, etc. The purpose of keeping

this name is no other than this that like Bibi Fatima (RAZ), you should also perform noble deeds.

Every virtuous father keeps the name of his daughter after the name of some renowned and pious lady so that his daughter too may turn out to be a pious lady like her. Let us at least know as to who were those renowned daughters whose name tallies with your name. Then you too do loveable and noble deeds like them, to uphold the honour of your name.

GOLDEN NECLACE PART-II

MEANING OF WORDS

Lesson 1.	Precious	=	Of great value and beauty.
	Kith and kin	=	Friends and relations.
	Sparkling	=	Sending out flashes of light, glittering.
	Esteem	=	Have a high opinion of, respect.
	Acquaintance	=	Person whom one knows (less intimately than a friend).
	Adorable	=	Loveable, delightful.
	Precaution	=	Care taken in advance to avoid risk.
	Fatal	=	Causing, ending in death, disaster.
	Bier	=	Moveable wooden stand for a coffin of a dead body.
Lesson 2.	Implication	=	Being implicated (in a crime) hinted or suggested, but not expressed.
	Rhythm	=	Regular succession of weak and strong stress, accents, sounds or movements (in speech, music).
	Spontaneously	=	Done, happening from Natural impulse, not caused or suggested by a thing or subject outside.
	Idolator	=	Worshipper of Idols.

	Ferocious	=	Cruel, savage.
	Brandish	=	Wave about (to display).
	Inspire	=	Put uplifting thought, feelings or aims into, with creative power.
	buckle on	=	Fasten.
Lesson 3.	'Ruku'	=	Bowing.
	'Sajdah'	=	Prostration.
	Reverence	=	Deep respect, feeling of wonder, awe.
	Dismay	=	Feeling of fear and discouragement.
	Helter skelter	=	Disorderly haste.
Lesson 4.	Inadvertently	=	Not paying or showing proper attention.
	Laudable	=	Deserving praise.
Lesson 5.	Satiate	=	Satisfy fully.
	Affluent	=	Wealthy, abundant.
	Destitute	=	Without food, clothes and other things necessary for life.
	Encomiums	=	Very high praise.
	Enthuse	=	Show enthusiasm for.
	Cajole	=	Use flattery or deceipt to persuade or soothe, or to get information.
	Calumny	=	Slander, false statement about a person, made to damage his character.
Lesson 8.	Sobriety	=	Quality or condition of being sober.
Lesson 9.	Manifold	=	Many and various.
	Martyr	=	Person who is put to death for his religious beliefs, or great principle or cause.